

claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto; and rejects claims 3-6, 12-14, 23, 27, 29 and 31-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto in view of Japanese Patent No. 6,246,777 to Suzuki et al. (Suzuki). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

As agreed during the June 22 personal interview, the applied references fail to disclose or render obvious "a cylindrical molded body . . . having an inner surface and an outer surface, defining a mouth end portion and a main body portion" and "wherein said insert is bonded to the outer surface of said side wall portion," as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 3, 28 and 30.

As agreed during the interview, Fig. 11 of Matsumoto merely shows the entirety of a press-fit mold. In particular, Matsumoto discloses, at col. 10, lines 54-62, that the male and female molds 1 and 2 are opened so that there is a clearance between the molds, and the female mold 2 is lowered towards the male mold 1. Thus, Matsumoto discloses that its molded article is press-fitted and box-shaped. Matsumoto discloses that a molded article of Fig. 11 fills a shallow, rectangular box, and not a cylinder mirrored from the mold of Fig. 11, as alleged by the Office Action.

Based on the interpretation that Matsumoto discloses a press-fitted and box-shaped molded article, Matsumoto at best discloses that the surface adjacent to the cavity of the male mold 1 is the alleged mouth end portion and the side walls (left and right edges) of the molded article comprise the alleged main body portion. Matsumoto also discloses, in Fig. 12, that the skin material 6 is provided along a surface adjacent to the cavity of the female mold 2 (alleged inner surface), and not bonded to the outer surface of the side wall portion of the main body portion, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 3, 28 and 30. Suzuki fails to cure this deficiency of Matsumoto because Suzuki is silent with respect to a sheet shaped insert.

Thus, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 3, 28 and 30 recite patentable subject matter. Claims 2, 4-6, 12-14, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 31-33 are patentable for at least the reasons that independent claims 1, 28 and 30 are patentable, as well as for the additional features they recite.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-6, 12-14, 22, 23 and 26-33 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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